

II Corinthians 1-5

I. Background

1. This letter or epistle was written by Paul (human instrument; II Peter 1:21) about AD 58 to the church in Corinth which was started about AD 54.
2. Paul had already written a letter (I Corinthians) of reproof to this same church about two years before. It appears the first letter was carried to them by Timothy. (I Cor. 4:17)
3. It seems the problems in the church grew worse after the first letter. This may have been due to Timothy's youth and lack of authority.
4. Paul then sent Titus to make sure they obeyed his commands given by the Lord.
5. Also Paul had promised to visit the church "if the Lord permit" (I Cor. 16:3-7), but circumstances were such that he was delayed along the way. (II Cor. 1:15-16) Paul's enemies took occasion of his failure to visit them by saying he was inconsistent and fickle. This caused much grief to Paul even to the point he "despaired even of life." (I Cor. 1:8c)
6. Paul had hoped to meet Titus at Troas, but he was not there and his heart was burdened. Never had he felt himself so helpless and beaten down--which he describes in this letter. He suffered both physically and emotionally while waiting to hear from Corinth. (II Cor. 2:13)
7. He finally met Titus in Macedonia and Titus gave him the good news--that the majority of the church was behind him and obeying his word. Tension was relieved (II Cor. 7:6) as he renewed what he already knew--that Christ was and is our comfort in the midst of trials.
8. Thus, I'll use as the theme "Christ - our comfort in the midst of trials."
9. Therefore it was with joy that Paul writes this letter as he bears his heart and lets us see his love and concern for the work of the Lord.

CHAPTER 1:

II. Introduction V. 1-3

V. 1

1. "Paul" = a Gentile name; his name was placed at the onset of the letter as was the custom in that day, rather than place it at the end, as we do today; identifies the human instrument God used to write this letter (II Peter 1:21); this was the fourth letter or epistle Paul penned down.
2. "An apostle" = one sent on a mission to represent another person--the person sent being given credentials and the responsibility of carrying out the orders of the one sending him; Paul met the qualifications of Acts 1:21-22 for being an apostle on the road to Damascus by special revelation as II Cor. 15:8 bears out.
3. "Jesus" = the earthly name of God incarnate (God robed in flesh); the Saviour of mankind.
4. "Christ" = the Anointed One; the Messiah of the OT.
5. "Will" = desire; pleasure; choice; Paul wants his readers to clearly understand that he is not an apostle by his own choosing, nor by man's election, but that he was called, ordained, commissioned, and sent by God.
6. "Timothy" = Paul clearly distinguishes between himself and Timothy, who is a brother, but not an apostle; Timothy was with Paul when he wrote the letter and may or may not have been the secretary that wrote this epistle as Paul dictated it; Paul had an eye problem and sometimes he dictated what the Lord breathed to him (II Tim. 3:16) to someone else to write and then he would write the closing with large letters to authenticate the letter as being from the Apostle Paul. (Col. 4:18)
7. "Brother" = from the same womb; refers to the saved who are all from the womb of God (Godly sorrow; Holy Ghost conviction).
8. The honorable prominence that Paul gave to Timothy marked him out for future leadership and prepared the people to whom this epistle was written to accept Timothy as they would Paul.
9. "Unto" = indicates who this epistle was written to.
10. "The church" = a called out assembly; a group of baptized believers who meet together to glorify the Lord; the only called out assembly that exists today is the local church of which there are many which are only types of the church of the firstborn (Heb. 12:23) which will be called out at the rapture; then there will be a called out assembly in heaven which will be a local visible body.
11. "Which is at Corinth" = the geographical location of this church Paul is writing to.
12. "Saints" = set apart; saved; Christians; those who have had a "sanctifying work" of the Holy Spirit completed in their lives. (I Peter 1:2; John 16:8-11)
13. "With all the saints which are in all Achaia" = this epistle was not only written to the saints in Corinth but to all in "Achaia" = the province of which Corinth was the capital; this epistle is for us today since it is in God's preserved word.

V. 2

1. This verse is Paul's usual introductory message to the saints.
2. "Grace" = sanctifying grace, not justifying, for he is writing to saints who were already justified; this grace enables the saints of God to overcome obstacles in their daily living and keep on keeping on for the glory of God; we have access (freedom to enter through the assistance or favor of another) into this grace by faith (Rom. 5:2); this word was also used as a greeting among the Greeks.
3. "Peace" = sanctifying peace, not justifying of Rom. 5:1, for he is writing to saints who were already justified; this peace is the peace of God that passes all understanding, even in troubled times (Phil. 4:6-7); a state of Christian tranquility; we are fighting *from* victory not *for* victory; this word was used and is still used now as a greeting among the Hebrews.
4. "Be to you" = refers to the saints at Corinth.
5. Paul may have been using these terms only as a greeting to the Greeks and Hebrews, but I think he meant more than a greeting as we have just defined above.
6. "From" = this grace and peace comes from God as the source whom he identifies as "our Father" (personal) and "the Lord Jesus Christ."
7. The Greek construction refers to God as "our Father" = as the source of this grace and peace and also to God as our "Lord Jesus Christ" as the source of this grace and peace. Paul establishes the truth that Jesus Christ is God at the very beginning of this book.
8. "Lord" = supreme in authority; Master; Jesus the Christ.
9. "Jesus" = the earthly name of God incarnate (God robed in flesh); the Saviour of mankind.
10. "Christ" = the Anointed One; the Messiah of the OT.

V. 3

1. "Blessed" = means good words; we get our word "eulogize" from this Greek word; to speak good words of another; this Greek word is used only eight times in the NT and every time it is used in connection with God.
2. "Blessed be God" = carries the meaning that He is the only one worthy to be praised.
3. Paul used three titles for God in this verse and in them we can see the source of comfort in our world.

A. "Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" = the coming of Jesus into the world brought the greatest comfort for troubled lives by paying the price for sin on Calvary and forgiving all who come to Him.

B. "Father of mercies" = God is the originator of mercy in the world; He is merciful because He is God not because man deserves it; mercy keeps me from getting what I deserve each time I sin; Lam. 3:22-23 says His mercies are new every day.

C. "God of all comfort" = the Greek word for "comfort" means help or encouragement; God is the source of all encouragement or comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted.

III. Paul's explanation of his ministry. Chap. 1-5

A. Suffering but not defeated. II. Cor 1:4-24

This chapter reveals the heart of Paul like no other chapter. Here we see Paul, the great apostle, admitting his fears and failures as he tells of the sufferings he had endured. Suffering of the saints has perplexed many people and they ask, "Why must the righteous suffer?" In this chapter, as Paul recounts his personal experiences, he gives three reasons why God permits His own to suffer.

1. That we might comfort others. V. 4-7

V. 4

1. "Who" = refers to the God of all comfort in verse 3.
2. "Comforteth" = to be called alongside someone to aid and to uplift them in a time of weakness; to exhort, encourage, and love; the tense reveals continuous action; this word comes from the same root word as "comforter" in John 14:16 where it refers to the Holy Spirit; this root word is used seven times in verses 4-7.
3. "Us" = "we" = refers to the saved, Paul included.
4. "Tribulation" = "trouble" = grievous affliction or distress; means pressure, then distress and anguish--to be under a burden; to be put in a strait (between a rock and a hard place); refers to all kinds of trials which men are called to endure as Christians.
5. "That" = introduces the reason we are comforted by God--that we might help others.
6. Paul spoke from experience for he had been under pressure. (II Cor. 11:23b-28)
7. By means of the comfort which God gives us, we can, by the aid of that experience, share that comfort with others who are in life's storms. This is speaking in a spiritual sense more than in a physical.

V. 5

1. "Sufferings of Christ" = I Peter 4:13 says we are "partakers of Christ's sufferings" which means to become a sharer of His sufferings, not on the cross, but for righteousness' sake; Paul also wanted to experience (know) the "fellowship of his sufferings" in Phil 3:10; this refers to joint participation (fellowship) in His suffering, not for sin on the cross, but for His sake and for His glory. (Acts. 14:22; II Tim. 3:12)
2. "Abound" = "aboundeth" = to exceed a fixed measure; to be more than enough; to remain over; to be in super abundance; the tense reveals continuous action; translated "remained" in Mat. 14:20 to describe the fragments taken up "over and above" what had been eaten.
3. "Us" = "our" = the saints at Corinth and Paul included; applies to all the saved today as well.
4. "Consolation" = same Greek word as comfort; to be called alongside someone to aid and uplift them in a time of weakness.
5. "For as" and "so...also" = compares two things of equal rank or nature as in Rom. 5:20; "for as" the sufferings of Christ may be present in abundance, "so...also" is the encouragement and comfort present in abundance for enduring the trial.
6. "By Christ" = the source of consolation; apart from Christ, suffering often leads to despair rather than comfort; He giveth encouragement (comfort) more than enough. (Eph. 3:20)
7. We sometimes ask why trouble comes our way. The answer to that is that God is preparing us for service, for we cannot lead others where we have not been ourselves.

V. 6

1. "And" = introduces an additional thought that the comfort of the apostle, as well as his affliction, was not only designed for his own spiritual training, but was the source of direct blessing to his converts because it enabled him, both by example (Phil. 1:14) and by the lessons of experience, to strengthen others in affliction.
2. "Whether" = since; in view of the fact; introduces a first class conditional sentence in the Greek which assumes the condition to be true and not hypothetical in nature-- "whenever we suffer" = or "every time we suffer."
3. "We" = Paul is basically referring to himself.
4. "Afflicted" = base word for "tribulation" in verse 4; grievous affliction or distress.

5. "Your" = the saints at Corinth.
6. "Consolation" = comfort; to be called alongside someone to aid and uplift them in a time of weakness.
7. "Salvation" = deliverance from what they were facing.
8. "Effectual" = to be operative; wrought out.
9. "In the enduring" = "by your enduring;" by your patience in such suffering.
10. "Of the same sufferings which we also suffer" = refers to severe pain.
11. "Also" = indeed.
12. "Or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation" = one design of being comforted is that we may be able to impart comfort to others in the times of similar trials and calamity.
13. God allows tribulation and trouble to come on a person and then He comforts that person so that they can comfort others who are also in trouble.

V. 7

1. "Our" = Paul and Timothy.
2. "You" = "ye" = the saints in Corinth; applies to the saved who are reading this epistle.
3. "Hope" = a desire of some good with an expectation of obtaining it.
4. "Stedfast" = firmly fixed; established.
5. "Knowing" = to have absolute positive knowledge of the facts; the Greek construction reveals that Paul had known these facts (the rest of this verse) for sometime, and no matter the circumstances, the facts did not change.
6. "Partakers of the sufferings" = to be a partner or a companion in something; to share with someone in something, in this case the suffering for the cause of Christ; Paul listed a partial list of some things he suffered (II Cor. 11:23b-28); and he knew the saints at Corinth did also.
7. "So *shall ye be* also of the consolation" = Paul knew that he had been comforted and so would the Corinthians.
8. "Also" = indeed.

9. Paul had a firm hope that the church of Corinth would reap the benefit of his sufferings. These verses put a whole new perspective on suffering, hardships, and trials in the Christian life; therefore, Paul could say what he did in II Cor. 12:9b.

2. That we might have confidence in God alone.

V. 8-11

V. 8.

1. "We" = "our" = "us" = Paul and Timothy.
2. "Would" = to desire; to wish; negated by "not."
3. "Brethren" = from the same womb; refers to the saved who are all from the womb of God (Godly sorrow; Holy Ghost conviction); Paul gave benefit of doubt to all professors by calling them brethren even though he knew some were not saved. (II Cor. 13:5)
4. "Have you ignorant" = to be ignorant; means not having knowledge.
5. "Trouble" = same word as tribulation in verse 4; means pressure; distress or straits--enclosed narrow places.
6. "Which came to us in Asia" = refers to the trouble just spoken of and the language used puts it among the most excruciating of human experiences; this seems to refer not just to one incident but to a group of calamities to which he was exposed in Ephesus the capital of Asia, in Acts 19; perhaps more particularly it refers to the conflict which he had been compelled to have with the wild beasts there (I Cor. 15:32); these beasts may have actually been wild animals or they could have been the men he had to face who acted like wild beasts; either way externally he faced trouble of the most excruciating experience.
7. "Came" = means was created; these events were custom made for him; God had already forewarned Paul that he would suffer greatly for the sake of the gospel. (Acts 9:16)
8. These experiences caused Paul to face trouble internally:
 - A. "Were pressed out of measure" = means to carry a heavy load; weighted down exceeding.
 - B. "Above strength" = beyond all human ability or power to cope; refers to a hopelessly difficult situation he is describing.
 - C. "Insomuch" = with the result that; the pressure under which Paul was laboring naturally made him to be "despaired even of life" = to be utterly at loss; be utterly

destitute of measures or resources; he was in utter perplexity about his life; Paul had almost lost his will to keep on traveling the road of life.

9. It takes character to admit failure. This lets us know the Bible is the Word of God because men do not naturally speak of their failures and weakness. This within itself gives us comfort and hope--to know that even great saints are still made of clay. Paul bares his heart to the Corinthians, not to win their sympathy but to teach them the lesson he learned--trust God alone!

V. 9

1. "But" = could be "yea;" word strengthens verse 8.
2. "We" = refers here to Paul.
3. "Sentence" = an answer; this is a judicial response and is here synonymous with verdict; it means that Paul felt that he was condemned to die with no hope of acquittal.
4. "In ourselves" = means against ourselves or we expected certainly to die.
5. "That we should not trust in ourselves" = means he had such a certain prospect of death, that he could put no reliance on himself; all he could do was to cast himself on the protection of that God who had power to deliver him from his troubles if He chose to, and that power would be similar to that which is put forth when the dead are raised.
6. Paul had experienced that before at Lystra. (Act 14:19-20)

V. 10

1. "Who" = "whom" = "he" = God which (who) raiseth the dead.
2. "Us" = "we" = the saints in Corinth, including Paul; applies to all the saved.
3. "Delivered" = to rescue; carries the idea of being snatched away from harm; the tense is past tense.
4. "From so great a death" = from a state of dejection and despair, which seemed to show death in all its power.
5. "And doth deliver" = the tense is present, thus continuous action; Paul could count on the God of comfort presently to be along side to aid, because his faith no doubt was increased from the past experience of deliverance.
6. "Trust" = contains a form of the Greek word for "hope;" actually here means to put one's hope, trust, and faith in the Lord God Almighty.

7. "He will yet deliver" = the tense is future; implies that Paul knew and expected many a peril of equal intensity lay before him and that he could always count on God to be along side every step of the way and He would deliver always, either through or up.

8. This verse also speaks of the three parts of salvation:

A. Justification-quickened our dead spirit--delivered us from the penalty of sin. (Eph. 2:1)

B. Sanctification-delivers our soul from the power of sin day by day because we have permanent present access into the grace of God. (Rom. 5:2)

C. Glorification-will deliver our body from the presence of sin.

9. You can always count on the God of comfort to be along side every step of the way and He will deliver you either from, through, or in (up).

V. 11

1. "Ye" = refers to the saints at Corinth.

2. "Also" = indeed.

3. "Helping together" = one word in the Greek; co-operating; aiding; assisting; the idea is that Paul felt that his trials would amount to good and give occasion for thanksgiving; this would be accomplished "by prayer" = refers to prayer to God for particular benefits, namely "that he will yet deliver us" (verse 10); this is intercessory prayer.

4. "For" = means on one's behalf or for one's sake.

5. "Us" = refers to Paul and those with him on this missionary journey he was on.

6. "The gift *bestowed* upon us" = refers to the favor shown to Paul in his rescue from the trials that caused him to "despair even of life." (verse 8)

7. "By means of many persons" = indicates Paul felt that many prayed.

8. "Thanks may be given by many on our behalf" = the idea is that as he had been delivered from great dangers (trials; perils) by the prayers of many persons, it was proper also that thanksgiving should be offered by as many in his behalf or on account of his deliverance.

3. That we might claim the promises of God.

V. 12-24

V. 12

1. We need to understand the circumstances involved before we will understand verses 12-24.

A. Paul suffered tribulation (internal pressure) even to the point that he thought he would die while waiting to hear how the church responded to his first letter.

B. He had said he would visit the church once as he made his way to Macedonia (I Cor. 16:5) and then again as he returned to Jerusalem--Judaea. (verse 16)

C. Circumstances had forced him to change his plans; therefore, his enemies at Corinth were accusing him of being fickle and undependable--saying "You can't depend on what Paul's letters say, yet he claims these letters are God's message to us."

D. Paul answers this in these verses.

2. "Our" = refers primarily to Paul and then to those with him.

3. "Rejoicing" = boasting; glorying; may have sounded like he was boasting in what he is about to say--"this:"

A. "The testimony of our conscience" = he had an approving conscience which did not condemn him on the subject at hand--his failing to visit after he had said he would come by Corinth; I Cor. 4:19 clarifies that he said "if the Lord will." (James 4:15)

B. "That in simplicity" = purity; frankness; integrity; word stands opposed to double dealings and purposes.

C. "And godly sincerity" = the sincerity of God; seems to refer to such sincerity as God manifests and approves in Paul's heart; "sincerity" properly denotes clearness, such as is judged or discerned in sunshine; refers to Paul's purposes and aims being open and manifest, as if seen in the sunshine.

D. "Not with fleshly wisdom" = not with the wisdom which is manifested by the men of this world.

E. "But by the grace of God" = means that Paul had been influenced by such principles as would be suggested or prompted by the influence of God's grace.

4. "We have had our conversation in the world" = refers to conduct and behavior; Paul, well aware that the world was looking on, states that he had conducted himself in accordance with the principles of the grace of God and had been influenced by that.

5. "More abundantly to you-ward" = indicates earnestly and especially to the saints in Corinth--you-ward.

6. Paul affirms in this verse that in all things (even when he told them he would come by) he had acted in the manner to which the grace of God prompted, and that his conduct, in all respects, had been of entire simplicity (purity) and in godly sincerity (honest or sincerity of God).

V. 13

1. "For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or acknowledge" = Paul did not write one thing to one member and something else to the public assembly; the re-occurrence of self-defense and bearing of his heart seems to reflect his being told, probably by Titus who brought back a report from Corinth, that he had been accused of insincerity.

2. "What ye read" = means to know accurately by reading.

3. "Acknowledge" = fully known; to admit to be true--that Paul was sincere in his intentions to come to Corinth.

4. "Trust" = hope; Paul expected the Corinthians to admit that it was true that he was sincere and that he was a man who would keep his promises.

5. "Even" = indeed.

6. "To the end" = always; to the end of life; refers to the rapture since Paul refers to the "day of Christ" in verse 14.

V. 14

1. "Also" = indeed.

2. "Acknowledged" = word means precise and correct knowledge; to admit to be true.

3. "In part" = refers to the fact that not everyone in the church acknowledged Paul's sincerity because someone had to spread the false rumor about Paul's intentions; Pro. 6:19 says God hates those who sow discord among the brethren.

4. "Rejoicing" = the ground of boasting; implies that the Corinthians acknowledged the benefits which they received through Paul.

5. "Even as ye also *are* our's" = there was mutual rejoicing; Paul placed himself on the same level with his converts. (I Thess. 2:19-20; Phil. 2:16)

6. "In the day of the Lord Jesus" = refers to the rapture--when the Lord comes back in the air for the resurrection of the saints. (I Thess. 4:16-17)

V. 15

1. "In this confidence" = trust; reliance; refers to the reliance on the mutual respect and affection that existed between Paul and the saints at Corinth.
2. "I" = Paul; when speaking of matters purely personal, Paul usually reverts to the first person--"I" not "we" or "us."
3. "I was minded to come unto you before" = my original desire was; he really did intend to come unto them as he stated in the first letter; when he wrote that he did add "if the Lord permit." (I Cor. 16:5-7; James 4:15)
4. "That ye might have a second benefit" = "benefit" means grace; Paul was saying that his coming would be a second favor freely bestowed upon them; the first favor could have been when he went to them when the church was started or it could apply to the first letter he wrote them which gave instruction whereby they could grow.

V. 16

1. Here Paul restates his intention recorded in I Cor. 16:5-6 of making two stops at Corinth. One on the way to Macedonia and one on the way back to Judaea.
2. "Pass by you" = refers to passing through their city; this would not have been the direct way from Ephesus (which is where he planned to come from) to Macedonia but he had planned to go out of his way in order to make them a visit.
3. "And to come again out of Macedonia unto you" = again this would not have been a direct way to Judaea.
4. "Of you to be brought on my way toward Judaea" = speaks of the custom in ancient days to accompany a departing guest for a short distance toward his next destination.
5. Paul's object of going to Judaea was to carry the collection for the poor saints which he had been at so much pains to collect throughout the churches of the Gentiles.

V. 17

1. "Therefore" = in view of the fact that I was "thus minded" = to come. (verse 15)
2. "Did I use lightness?" = inconsistency; changeableness; the charge had probably been made that he made the promise without any due consideration or without any real purpose of performing it; by this question he sharply denies that it was a purpose formed in a light and trifling manner.

3. "Do I purpose according to the flesh? " = the phrase means "Do I purpose in a manner such as the men of the world do, in such a way as to promote my own ease and gratification and disregard the will of God?"

4. "That with me there should be yea yea, and nay nay?" = that is what men of the world do--they change their mind and alter their purpose without any good reason, thus saying yes and no to the same promise; Paul is implying this was not his character--he did not affirm a thing at one time and deny it at another or promise to do a thing one moment and refuse to do it the next.

5. His yes and no may be overruled by the Spirit. (Acts 16:6-10)

6. Paul's intended double visit to them was prevented not because of his lack of seriousness, but by their own unfaithfulness and his desire to spare them. (verse 23)

V. 18

1. "But *as God is true*" = God is faithful.

2. "Our word" = refers to Paul's preaching.

3. "Our word toward you was not yea and nay" = his preaching was not yes today and no tomorrow; he was not a fence straddler; it was not his character to be fickle, unsettled, and vacillating.

V. 19

1. "For" = introduces the proof of what he had just said.

2. "The Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you" = Paul preached Jesus Christ from the onset of his ministry (Acts 9:20); this meant he preached the gospel of Christ every where he preached--he was as firm as a rock and that message "was not yea and nay, but in him was yea" = his preaching did not represent the Lord as being fickle, changeable, unsettled, or unfaithful, but as true, consistent, and faithful; that preaching tried by time, proved it was not yes and no but a changeless yes. (Heb. 13:8)

3. "By us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus" = refers to Silas and Timothy who were with Paul on his first visit to Corinth.

4. God is faithful!

V. 20

1. "For all the promises of God in him *are* yea" = indicates that all the promises of God find their realizations and fulfillment in Christ; thus, their unchangeable fulfillment; Christ was a minister to confirm the promises alike to the Jews and the Gentiles (Rom. 15:8-9) and the promise of eternal inheritance. (Heb. 9:15)

2. "Are yea" = shall be certainly fulfilled.

3. "And in him Amen" = refers to Christ who is the Amen (Rev. 3:14); the Greek has the definite article "the;" this is a descriptive title of our blessed Lord--note the capital "A;" means truth and is equivalent to His word in John 14:6, "I am the truth;" Jehovah is the God of the Amen--He only can add "Amen" to every promise He utters and to everyone of His promises we are compelled to say "Amen"--so be it or it is truth.

4. "Unto the glory of God by us" = He fulfills them and He gives us the faith to claim them; therefore, He gets all the glory--manifestation of that which calls forth praise.

5. "By us" = refers to the saved, not only those in Corinth but us as well today.

V. 21

1. "He" = "God" = refers to God the Father.

2. "Stablisheth" = to make firm, steadfast in Christ; establish; one is "in Christ" when saved but needs to be strengthened "in Christ" after we are saved. (Acts 16:4-5)

3. "Us with you" = refers to Paul (us) and the Corinthians (you); Paul said God is the One who made me steadfast the same as you, and for you to challenge me as to my sincerity and steadfastness is to nullify your own steadfastness.

4. "Hath anointed us" = means reception of the Spirit; the anointing with the Holy Spirit refers to the act of God the Father sending the Spirit in answer to the prayer of God to take up His permanent residence in the believer. (I John 2:27 and I John 2:20 where "unction" is the same Greek word as "anointing" in verse 27)

5. Second "us" = refers to Paul and the Christian saints; applies to all the saved.

V. 22

1. "Who" = refers to God (verse 21) who works in all saints' lives.

2. "Also" = indeed.

3. "Hath also sealed us" = the Holy Spirit is Himself the seal (Eph. 1:13); a seal denotes something that is genuine, authentic, confirmed, or approved, as when a deed, compact, or agreement is sealed; when Christians are said to be sealed, it means that the Holy Spirit is given to them to confirm them as belonging to God.

4. "And given the earnest of the Spirit" = "earnest" refers to that given as a pledge or down payment that the full amount will subsequently be paid; means properly a pledge given to ratify a contract--that which is regarded as a pledge that all the price will be paid, denotes that God gives to His people the influences of His Spirit--His operation on the heart as a pact or pledge that all the blessings of the covenant of redemption shall be given to them. (Eph. 1:14)

5. In the symbolism of Scripture, a seal signifies 1) a finished transaction, 2) ownership, and 3) security.

V. 23

1. "Moreover" = beyond what has been said.

2. "I call God for a record" = this is a solemn oath, or appeal to God and implies that if he did not in this case declare the truth, he desired that God would be a witness (record) against him, and would punish him accordingly.

3. "Upon my soul" = to confirm the appeal of its honesty and integrity.

4. "That to spare you" = to avoid the necessity of inflicting punishment on them--of exercising severe and painful discipline; if he went among them in the state of disorder which prevailed there, he would feel it necessary to exert his authority as an apostle and remove at once the offending members from the church; so he forbore going.

5. "I came not as yet unto Corinth" = I forbore to come as I had intended--reason being to spare them; a delayed visit gave them time to take to heart the first letter and get things right with God.

V. 24

1. "Not for that we have dominion over your faith" = the expression "to spare you" might have been resented as involving a claim "to lord it over their faith;" he had authority as an apostle but he did not want to lord over their faith; Peter stated for elders (pastors) not to do so in I Peter 5:3.

2. "But are helpers of your joy" = the main object was to promote their joy; Paul did not want to cause them grief which is that he desired to spare them; the object of all his visits was "for your furtherance and joy of faith." (Phil. 1:25)

3. "For by faith ye stand" = as far as their faith was concerned, they were not to blame; that remained unshaken and was independent of any visit or authority from Paul; but there were other points where they were shaken and Paul knew if he visited them while they were in that condition he would have to take severe measures, but if he postponed

his visit, he hoped they would get things right so that severe measures would be unnecessary.

CHAPTER 2:

B. Sorrowing but not despairing. II Cor. 2:1-17

1. Paul's tears over the church. V. 1-4

V. 1

1. Paul continues his explanation of his changed plans and shows his love and concern for the church and its problems.
2. "But I determined" = to judge; Paul is contrasting his final decision with his original desire, mentioned in II Cor. 1:15.
3. "With myself" = for myself; as the best course which I could take.
4. "That I would not come again to you in heaviness" = in grief; if Paul could avoid it, he would not come in circumstances which would have grieved both him and the Corinthian saints.

V. 2

1. This verse simply says; "If I should come among you and inflict sorrow by punishing your offending brethren by an act of severe discipline, who would there be to give me comfort but those very persons whom I had afflicted with grief?"
2. Paul looked to the churches he had served for encouragement in the times of affliction and he did not want to cause them to be sad, but he did not compromise truth. He expected them to gladden his heart when he needed it.

V. 3

1. "And I wrote this same unto you" = probably refers to the first epistle; implies that what he wrote is the same basic thing he is writing now.

2. "Lest, when I came, I should have sorrow from them of whom I ought to rejoice" = lest the conduct of the church and the abuses which prevail in it should give Paul sorrow when the condition of the church should cause him to rejoice--be exceeding glad.

3. "Having confidence in you all" = to be persuaded; trust; he was persuaded that they would do what was right and needful which would be for their benefit and his comfort = "that my joy is *the joy* of you all" = even though Paul had enemies in Corinth, he was persuaded that the general character of the church would wish him well and make him happy by repenting of their sin.

V. 4

1. "Affliction" = tribulation; pressure.

2. "Anguish" = constraint of mind; distress.

3. "For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears" = Paul was so concerned about the problems in the church that he was under a burden (load) for the church to the extent that tears flowed down his cheeks as he wrote the first letter.

4. "Not" = carries the meaning of "not only."

5. "Not that ye should be grieved" = to make sorrowful; from same base word as "sorrow" in II Cor. 7:10 which works repentance; Paul's intent was not that they be grieved only but that they repent when they saw the love shown in the letter Paul wrote.

6. "Know" = to know by experience.

7. "Love" = agape love shed abroad in Paul's heart when he was saved. (Rom. 5:5)

8. "More abundantly" = overflowing; Paul had a heavy burden for his Jewish brethren (Rom. 9:1-3) and also for the Gentiles (Corinthians) to whom he was called to carry the gospel. (Act 26:16-17)

2. Paul's testimony concerning the offender. V. 5-11

V. 5

1. In this verse Paul begins to deal with the man who committed incest with his father's wife (I Cor. 5), where Paul had admonished the church to discipline the man (church member) who was living in open sin. (I Cor. 5:5)

2. "If any have caused grief" = "any" is singular; therefore, it is referring to the individual in I Cor. 5; notice Paul does not mention him by name which many indicate that the names of offending brethren in a church should not be put on the records of

disciplinary actions to be handed down to posterity; Paul makes his remarks general, that it might be as tender and kind to the offending brother as possible; the church knew who Paul was referring to.

3. "He hath not grieved me, but in part" = Paul was not the only one grieved but also those in the church at Corinth were grieved.

4. "That I may not overcharge you all" = "overcharge" means not to bear too hard on; Paul was unwilling to lay too heavy a charge upon the whole church, since they had cleared themselves by following the directions that he gave them in I Cor. 5.

V. 6

1. "Sufficient" = to accomplish all that was necessary.

2. "To such a man" = again Paul does not record his name.

3. "Is this punishment" = refers to the disciplinary action the church did as they followed Paul's commands in I Cor. 5; it was sufficient because the man was humbled and repented; and now the object of Paul is to have him restored.

4. "Which was *inflicted* of many" = some would say the majority; it may have been that some in the church did not want to punish him but the church acted and did so; the church is not a democracy with the majority ruling, it is a theocracy with God's will to be done and that was what Paul was telling them--what God breathed. (II Tim. 3:16)

V. 7

1. "Contrariwise" = instead of continuing to punish the man; it seems that many in the church were still punishing the man by not being willing to receive him back into the church after he had repented; thus Paul said "contrariwise" = the opposite you need to do.

2. "Forgive" = to treat the offender as not guilty and admit him into their fellowship.

3. "Comfort" = to console; strengthen; encourage; come along side to aid.

4. "Lest perhaps" = it might be.

5. "Such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow" = this is a strong expression denoting intensity of grief; overwhelmed with grief; or being drowned in sorrow; refers to the offending brother being destroyed--his life would waste away under the effect of his excommunication and disgrace and sink him to the grave.

V. 8

1. "Wherefore" = in view of the fact just stated in verse 7.
2. "Beseech" = to beg; to ask with urgency.
3. "Confirm" = to give authority; to establish; to make valid by formal approval; this formal approval would be acceptance publicly back into church fellowship and demonstrate their love toward him.

V. 9

1. "For to this end also did I write" = "also" = lets us know that in this verse is the third reason he wrote to the church; the first reason was stated in verse 3--to prepare them for his visit; the second reason was stated in verse 4--to manifest to them his love; now the third reason--to test their obedience and prove the strength of their character.
2. "Know" = to know by experience.
3. "Proof" = tried character and faithfulness.
4. "Whether ye be obedient in all things" = they had been obedient to Paul's first letter by practicing church discipline which went against the grain "so to speak;" now Paul asked them to be obedient by restoring the man which involved forgiveness and that is also "against the grain."

V. 10

1. "To whom" = refers again to the man who committed incest in I Cor. 5 without mentioning his name (again).
2. "To whom ye forgive any thing, I *forgive* also" = Paul had confidence that the Corinthians were ready to forgive the man, then Paul was ready to join them and forgive the man also.
3. "If I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave *it*, for your sakes" = Paul forgave not on account of the offender alone but in order to promote the happiness and purity of the church--"for your sakes."
4. "In the person of Christ" = seems to mean in the presence of Christ; with His eye upon Paul and conscious that he was acting before Him and must give an account to Him.
4. The Bible is clear that if we do not forgive others then we cannot expect the Lord to forgive us. (Mat. 6:14-15)

V. 11

1. This verse states the reason Paul was willing to forgive the repentant man.
2. "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us" = to make an inroad; the idea is, that they should at once re-admit the penitent offender to their fellowship lest if they did not do it, Satan would take advantage of it to do injury to him and them.
3. "Satan" = "his" = the usual proper name given to the devil; denotes the great adversary of God and man; an accuser; an enemy.
4. "Us" = "we" = primarily refers to Paul.
5. "Ignorant" = not to understand; not to know; negated by "not" thus, Paul is saying he knew and understood what Satan's devices were.
6. "Devices" = his plans; his thoughts; his cunning; his skill.
7. Satan often takes advantage by his own dark and mischievous designs. We should be very cautious lest we give him an occasion to take advantage of us.

3. Paul's triumph in Christ . V. 12-17

V. 12

1. "Futhermore" = but; denotes a transition and serves to introduce something else--his travels.
2. "When I came to Troas" = a city that was on the regular route from Ephesus to Macedonia; Paul took that route because on his journey to Macedonia he had resolved not to go to Corinth "to spare them." (II Cor. 1:23)
3. "To *preach* Christ's gospel" = on account of the gospel of Christ--to promote it by preaching it.
4. "And a door was opened unto me of the Lord" = Paul came to Troas and could not find Titus (verse 13) but he did find a tremendous opportunity to preach the gospel (Rom. 8:28); in every place of trial there is always an open door of service.
5. "Of the Lord" = in the Lord; Paul found there a marked opportunity for work in Christ. (I Cor. 16:9)

V. 13

1. "I had no rest in my spirit" = deeply anxious; service is no substitute for peace.
2. "Because I found not Titus my brother" = the reason Paul had no rest in his spirit; Paul longed to meet Titus and get word from the church at Corinth.
3. "But taking my leave of them" = refers to the people of Troas; no doubt many urged Paul to stay and the place was such a promising field of labor, yet his anxiety was such that he wanted desperately to hear from Corinth so he left them.
4. "I went from thence (Troas) into Macedonia" = this was the place he expected to find Titus and to learn the state of Corinth's affairs.
5. It seems that he met Titus and received the good news that the offender had been disciplined, the majority of the church was behind Paul, and things were looking better at Corinth. (II Cor. 7:5-6) This blessed Paul so much that he broke into a song of praise. (verse 14)

V. 14

1. "Now thanks *be* unto God" = this instance of success gave occasion to Paul to express his gratitude to God.
2. "Which" = who; God is a person; therefore, this is masculine gender not neuter gender.
3. "Always causeth us to triumph in Christ" = the picture in this verse is familiar to every Roman but not to 21st century Christians; "triumph" speaks of the triumphal march to honor a Roman Conqueror--something like a parade through the streets of Rome; the procession included victors and victims; the conquerors with the commander at the lead were followed by the conquered led in chains to death or captivity.
4. "Maketh manifest" = to be made known; to make clear; one word in the Greek and with "eth" ending lets us know this is to be a continuous habitual action.
5. "Savour" = smell; odor.
6. "Maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place" = this parallels the scent of perfume that filled the air of the Roman triumphal entry into a city.
7. "His knowledge" = refers to God's knowledge; means that the knowledge of Christ was dispersed everywhere by Paul and this was acceptable and pleasant to God--though there might be many who would not profit from it and would perish. (verse 15b)
8. Christ is the victor and through His death on the cross He has conquered every foe. His saints share His victory and are the incense and savor as we spread His knowledge by life and lip.

V. 15

1. "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ" = refers to the saints; the meaning is that their labor is acceptable to God; this savor means life to other believers, but to the unbelievers headed for eternal death, it means death = "in them that are saved, and in them that perish."
2. Jesus was a savor of life to the repentant thief and a savor of death to the unrepentant thief. The saint's labor would be in order to save them, not to destroy them. Their desire was to bring all to heaven and this was acceptable to God. Whatever might be the result, whether successful or not, God would be pleased with self-denial, toil, and prayer that was honestly and zealously put forth to save others from death.

V. 16

1. "To the one" = refers to those who perish = "*we are* the savour of death unto death" = refers to those who respond to the preaching of the gospel as offensive and unacceptable and by their rejecting, they draw death on themselves; the gospel will be the means of greater condemnation to many.
2. "And to the other" = refers to those who embrace it = "the savour of life unto life" = an odor or fragrance producing life or tending to life--referring to salvation.
3. The gospel preached brings life to some and hardens others to the extent of death--eternal separation from God. This is similar to the phrase "the sun melts butter and hardens clay." Just as the bee brings honey to the owner and stings to others, so it is with the words of the gospel.
4. "Sufficient" = qualified; adequate.
5. "Who is sufficient for these things?" = Paul answers this question in II Cor. 3:5-6 (I Cor. 15:10; Phil. 4:13); men who feel as they should about the ministry will look to God for aid and will feel that He alone can sustain them in their duties.

V. 17

1. Paul now reverts back to the accusation that his word could not be trusted.
2. "For we are not as many" = "many" refers to the majority; the majority in Paul's day dealt untruly with the Word of God--preached another gospel. (Gal. 1:6)
3. "Corrupt" = make merchandise; in the ministry for personal gain.

4. "Which corrupt the word of God" = deal deceitfully with; to mix philosophy and human opinions with the Word of God--dilutes the Word of God for personal gain; this is exactly what the easy-believism crowd is doing--diluting the Word of God for nickels (money) and noses (number)--for personal gain.

5. "But as of sincerity" = clearness; simplicity for babe's understanding; this is how Paul declared the Word of God; he did not mix his own notions with true doctrines.

6. "But as of God" = as influenced by Him; as under His control and direction; as having been sent by Him; as acting by His command.

7. "In the sight of God" = as if he felt that God's eye was always on him; if a person was conscious of this truth it should make him sincere and honest; it did Paul.

8. "Speak we in Christ" = in His name and for His cause; Paul was not speaking for his own cause but for Christ's cause.

9. We should deliver our message as Paul did:

A. With a deep consciousness that the eye of the all-seeing God is on us.

B. That we can conceal nothing from Him.

C. That we must soon give an account to Him--at the judgment seat of Christ.

CHAPTER 3:

C. Spiritual, not carnal. V. 3:1-18

In this chapter Paul explains his ministry of the NT gospel by showing the relationship between the OT Law and NT Gospel.

1. Written on hearts, not stones V. 1-3

V. 1

1. "Do we begin again to commend ourselves?" = this is designed evidently to meet an objection; Paul had been speaking of his triumph in the ministry (II Cor. 2:14) and of his sincerity and honesty, as contrasted with the conduct of many who corrupted the Word of God (II Cor. 2:17); some might say that these statements were designed to commend himself to the Corinthians but Paul says "Do we need to recommend ourselves in order to obtain your favor?"

2. "Or need we, as some *others*, epistles of commendation to you" = probably some of the Judaizers had brought letters (epistles) of recommendation to them from Judaea; Paul is not meaning to discredit those letters for it was common among the Greeks, the Romans, and the Jews to carry such a letter when traveling since there were not many Inns and travelers were dependent on the hospitality of those where they were going;

thus, a letter of recommendation would help them to be accepted by those where they would stay; but this was not what Paul practiced.

3. "Or *letters* of commendation from you?" = refers to a letter the Corinthians would write to recommend Paul to others where he went; Paul sought no such letter for he depended on his zeal, self-denial, and success to make him known and to give him affection of those to whom he ministered; he depended on the grace of God to make himself known.

V. 2

1. "Ye are our epistle" = the conversion of the Corinthians under the faithful labor of the apostle, was a better testimony of Paul's character and fidelity than any letter could be and that was "written on our hearts" = this is something permanent--refers to the very name and existence of the Church was engraved on his heart; those converted at Corinth were to Paul like those converted at Thessalonica. (I Thess. 2:19-20)

2. "Known and read of all men" = Corinth was a large city and their conversion would be known afar--all men would hear of it; their conversion, their life under the instruction of Paul, and the attestation which God had given among them to His laborers, was a sufficient testimonial to the world at large, that God had called him to the apostolic office.

V. 3

1. "*Forasmuch as ye are* manifestly declared" = to make known or be shown; the idea is that of public display.

2. "To be the epistle of Christ" = that which Christ has sent to be a testimony to Paul and his companions = "us."

3. "Ministered by us" = to be a servant; the idea is that Christ had employed their ministry in accomplishing this; Paul was one of the King's servants.

4. "Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God" = not with visible or perishable materials (ink used in Paul's day washed off easily) but spiritual in its origin and character.

5. "Not in tables of stone" = no doubt Paul had in his mind the tables of stone on which God wrote the ten commandments--the law (verse 7); these were frail and easily broken as Moses did in Exo. 32:19.

6. "But in fleshy tables of the heart" = the message of the gospel Paul preached was written by the Spirit of God in their hearts; refers to truths engraved on the heart; Paul no doubt was thinking about Jer. 31:33, Ezk. 11:19, and Ezk. 36:26.

2. Brings life, not death. V. 4-6

V. 4

1. "And such trust have we" = confidence, namely that we need no other recommendation to or from you.
2. "Through Christ" = the channel of this confidence; Christ alone can inspire such confidence in Paul and his mission.
3. "To God-ward" = in relation to God; it is confidence that God had appointed and sent Paul and his companions to Corinth and confidence that He will continue to bless them.

V. 5

1. "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves" = stated to guard against the appearance of boasting or of self-confidence; he did not mean to be understood that any of his success he had spoken of came from himself or that he was able by his strength to accomplish the great things which had been accomplished by his ministry.
2. "To think any thing as of ourselves" = "think" means to reason, consider, and then to impute to anyone; Paul had the capacity to form adequate judgments about his work, but it did not come from his own resources or of his independent origination.
3. "But our sufficiency is of God" = "sufficiency" means qualified; adequate; all success he traced to God (I Cor. 15:10; Phil. 4:13); Paul knew that he owed to God every clear idea on the subject of the gospel and life in general; how easy it would be for God to allow our minds to become cloudy, dark, and misty and affect our bodies with weakness and disease and destroy all power to even think correctly.
4. Our sufficiency is of God!

V. 6

1. "Who" = refers to God.
2. "Also" = indeed.
3. "Made able" = one word in the Greek; to make sufficient; in fact from the same root word as "sufficient" in verse 5; to equip one with adequate power to perform duties required; Paul gave God all the credit for making him adequate.
4. "Ministers" = servants; refers to being a preacher of the gospel.

5. "New testament" = new covenant; this is not referring to the 27 books we call the NT which was not written at that time, but the new covenant given to Israel. (Jer. 31:31)
6. "Not of the letter" = not of the law.
7. "But of the spirit" = but of the gospel.
8. "For the letter killeth" = the law was never given to impart life, it only administers death (Rom. 7:9-11); no man was ever saved through the law; some would ask "What good is the law? is it no account?" Oh! yes! (Rom. 7:12, 14a) it was given to back a man in the corner so he can realize his need for the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:19-20) and through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit (II Thess. 2:13) life is produced (John 6:63) = "but the spirit giveth life" = all this would not happen without the law. (Gal. 3:21-24)

3. Lasting glory, not fading glory. V. 7-13

V. 7

1. "But if the ministration of death" = refers to the law many times referred to as the law of Moses = "written and engraven in stones" = refers to the ten commandments written in stones by the hand of God.
2. "Was glorious" = manifestation of that which brings forth praise; there was glory in the OT ministry for glory hovered over the people in the wilderness--pillar of fire and cloud; glory filled the tabernacle and temple when they were finished (Exo. 40:33-35; II Chron. 5:13-14); in all OT ceremonies there was glory attached to them; and glory was on the mount when Moses received the law.
3. "So that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance" = Moses had been in God's presence and God's glory was reflected in his face and the people could not intently look on Moses's face; recorded in Exo. 34:29-35
4. "Which *glory* was to be done away" = this is not dealt with in Exo. 34; but Moses knew that this glory would fade away; it would soon cease for it was not designed to be permanent; this was a fading glory not a lasting glory.

V. 8

1. "The ministration of the spirit" = refers to the ministry of the Holy Spirit in salvation (John 16:8); denotes the gospel.
2. "Rather" = to a greater degree.

3. "Glorious" = manifestation of that which brings forth praise; since (if) the ministration of the law was glorious, the ministration of the gospel is much more glorious--in a much greater degree.

V. 9

1. This verse is repetition of what has just been stated, using different words.

2. "Ministration of condemnation" = refers to the OT law, especially the ten commandments; the law administered condemnation and death because no man, who has a depraved nature, can live up to it; therefore, condemnation--to pronounce guilty and sentenced to death.

3. "Be glory" = manifestation of that which brings forth praise.

4. "Much more" = to a greater degree.

5. "The ministration of righteousness" = refers to the plan by which God justifies men; thus, implying the preaching of the gospel and the work of the Holy Spirit whereby men are saved; the term justification is the meaning here. (Rom. 5:20-21)

6. "Exceed" = to be abundantly furnished with--"glory" = manifestation that brings forth praise.

V. 10

1. "For" = gives the reason that the latter ministration was far more abundant in glory.

2. "Even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect" = refers to the OT law, which was made glorious; it had no glory in regard to "by reason of the glory that excellet" = in other words the glory of the OT law is surpassed by the glory of the gospel, that the law relatively speaking has no glory left; it is like the splendor of the moon and stars compared with the bright light of the sun--the moon and stars cease to shine when the sun is in its zenith.

V. 11

1. Again Paul compares the OT law and the NT gospel.

2. "That which is done away" = refers to the law.

3. "Done away" = made to cease; to be put an end to; to be done away with; to be abolished; it had no permanency and it was designed to have none.

4. "If it *was* glorious" = it was.
5. "Much more" = to a greater degree.
6. "That which remaineth" = refers to the NT gospel; it is permanent, abiding, and perpetual.
7. "*Is* glorious" = manifestation of that which brings forth praise.

V. 12

1. "Seeing then" = in view of the facts just presented--that the gospel is permanent and perpetual = "that we have such hope" = desire for good with an expectation of obtaining it; refers to that which the ministers of the gospel had--more certain confidence than anything the law could furnish.
2. "We use" = we employ; we are accustomed to; he refers to the manner in which he preached the gospel--in "great plainness of speech" = refers to the boldness, clearness, openness, and frankness of his gospel message.

V. 13

1. "And not as Moses" = it was impossible for Moses to speak with the same bold plainness as Paul.
2. "*Which*" = who; Moses is a person not a thing; the Greek is masculine gender not neuter gender.
3. "Put a veil over his face" = Paul did not need a veil for he has nothing to hide; therefore, he was bold in his speech (verse 12); Paul is not trying to blame Moses--as if he did something wrong--for this was the plan and purpose of God.
4. The object of the veil was "that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished" = this means Moses put a veil over his face so no one could see the glory fade away; we have been taught that the veil was to keep from frightening the people--not so according to what Paul says here.
5. "Stedfastly look" = to gaze intently upon; negated by "not;" they could not discern the glory on Moses face because of the fact of designed concealment.
6. "To the end" = refers to the design, scope, or purpose of the law given to Moses; that end was the Messiah, and the glory of His gospel. (Rom. 10:4)
7. God never meant the glory of the old covenant and the law to remain. It was just a school master to bring us to Christ. (Gal. 3:24-25)

8. "That which is abolished" = the design of the law was that it should be abolished; it was never designed to be permanent.

4. Unveiled, not veiled. V. 14-16

V. 14

1. Paul here gives a spiritual application for the physical veil on Moses' face.
2. "Their" = refers to the Jews.
3. "Minds" = mental perception; refers to the heart.
4. "Were blinded" = to harden; to make hard like stone and then to make dull; this refers to the fact that the understandings of the Jews were dull and insensible so that they did not see clearly the design and end of their own institutions--old covenant--law.
5. "Until this day" = refers to the day Paul penned down this epistle, that even until that day, the Jewish people did not understand the true sense of their own Scripture nor understand the doctrine concerning the Messiah = "remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament" = refers to the old covenant.
6. "Which *vail* is done away in Christ" = in the manifestation or appearance of Jesus the Messiah, the veil is removed; God removed that veil when He rent the veil of the temple and fulfilled the OT types and prophecies in Christ.

V. 15

1. "But even unto this day" = the day when Paul wrote this epistle, about 30 years after Christ's death and resurrection; in fact this is still true until this day--the majority of the Jewish nation is still blinded concerning Christ. (John 1:11)
2. "When Moses is read" = a term referring to the old covenant; the first five books of the Bible were read regularly and constantly in their synagogues.
3. "The vail is upon their heart" = Israel did not see the temporary ministry of the law in Paul's day and the same is true in our day; they are holding on to a ministry that was never meant to last--a ministry with fading glory.

V. 16

1. "Nevertheless" = but; reveals a contrast that gives hope to individuals.
2. "It" = refers to the heart of Israel; applies to any individual.

3. "When it shall turn to the Lord" = this takes a completed work of Holy Ghost conviction which brings salvation and "the veil shall be taken away" = this even occurs in one when he is awakened and steps in the light (truth) the Holy Ghost so graciously sheds upon that person's heart--then he too has the veil taken away; this means they have understanding and if they will continue in the Lord's Word their heart will be made good ground and they will be saved--bring forth fruit. (John 8:31-32; Mat. 13:23)

4. We have nothing to hide and nothing to veil, and the glory will last forever and even get brighter and brighter.

5. Liberty, not bondage. V. 17-18

V. 17

1. "Now the Lord is the Spirit" = Paul spoke in verse 16 of the heart turning to the Lord who is that Spirit referred to in verse 6 that giveth life; when a man turns to Christ (Lord) it is through the Spirit (I Peter 1:2); Rom. 8:9 refers to the Spirit of God and that is equivalent to the Spirit of Christ who brings salvation; Col. 2:9 makes it clear that in Christ the Lord dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily; if one is saved they have Christ the Lord and also the Spirit of the Lord.

2. "And where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty" = true liberty is living as we should, not as we please; liberty of confidence (verse 4), and of frank speech (verse 12), and sonship (Gal. 4:6-7), and of freedom from guilt. (John 8:36)

3. The Spirit gives liberty from spiritual bondage. The old covenant was a covenant of works and bondage. (Acts. 15:10) But the new covenant of the gospel is a ministry of glorious liberty in Christ (Gal. 5:1) and this is not a license to sin. (Gal. 5:13)

V. 18

1. "But we all" = all saved; much of the discussion in this chapter was concerning the Jews but now Paul speaks to all the saved--saints.

2. "With open face" = with unveiled face.

3. "Beholding as in a glass" = one word in the Greek; means to look in a mirror; the mirror of that day was made of polished brass.

4. "The glory of the Lord" = refers to the splendor, majesty, and holiness of God as manifested in the gospel or of the Lord incarnate (God robed in flesh); the idea is that God was clearly and distinctly seen in the gospel; there was no obscurity, no veil, as in the case of Moses.

5. "Are changed into the same image" = the Greek construction implies a gradual transfiguration; a spiritual change which is produced in us while we behold Christ in His Word.

6. "From glory to glory" = refers to our being changed from one glorious level to another (Rom. 8:29); the complete likeness to Jesus will come when we see Him face-to-face. (I John 3:2)

7. "*Even* as by the Spirit of the Lord" = simply means it was by the Spirit of God alone that the heart was changed even under the gospel; were it not for His work, even the contemplation of the glorious truths of the gospel would be in vain and would produce no saving effect on the human heart.

8. When a child of God looks into the Word of God and sees the Son of God, the Spirit transforms (changes him to make him more like Christ. (Rom. 8:29) The saint is not in bondage and fear. (Rom. 8:15) This is a tender term and one can go into the very presence of God and enjoy His glory and grace. We can daily grow "from glory to glory" as we live in the Word and in the Spirit while in this world. (Titus 2:11-13)

CHAPTER 4:

D. Sincere, not deceitful. V. 4:1-18

In this chapter Paul gives evidences that prove he is sincere in his ministry.

1. His determination. V. 1

V. 1

1. "Therefore" = in view of the facts just mentioned in Chapter 3; refers to the fact that the light of the gospel is so clear because it reveals glorious truth, all obscurity is taken away, and we are permitted to behold as in a mirror the glory of the Lord. (II Cor. 3:18)

2. "Seeing we have this ministry" = refers to Paul being made a minister of the NT (covenant)--the gospel ministry which was so much more glorious than that of Moses; a ministry by which the Holy Spirit acts on the hearts of men; a ministry by which men are justified. (I Tim. 1:12-13)

3. "As we have received mercy" = the idea is, that it was by the mere mercy and favor of God that he had been intrusted with the ministry for he:

A. Persecuted the Lord Jesus by persecuting His church. (Acts. 9:4)

B. Murdered and made havoc (wasted, devastation, and destruction) of the church. (Acts 8:3)

C. Chief of sinners. (I Tim. 1:15)

D. Yet he received mercy and he never got over that. These mercies are new each day. (Lam. 3:22-23)

4. "As" = according as; indicates that according as we receive mercy "we faint not" = "faint" means to be utterly spiritless; wearied out; exhausted; negated by "not" which implies the maintenance of a holy courage and perseverance; denotes moral courage and is used in the sense of being in the midst of misfortune.

2. His honesty. V. 2-4

V. 2

1. There were some things Paul refused to do, such as using underhanded, deceitful practices to get followers.

2. "Renounced" = to cast off; to disown.

3. "Hidden" = secret; concealed; indicates that the motive the false teachers used was not right; they would try to trick people into believing and all they accomplished was to deceive even further.

4. "Dishonesty" = means a sense of shame; a feeling of disgrace which results from doing an unworthy thing. (Eph. 5:11)

5. "Walking" = to conduct one's life; to regulate one's life; negated by "not."

6. "Craftiness" = false wisdom; trickery; implies all subtle, cunning, underhanded dealing; Paul was saying he would not try to trick people into believing--really can't make them but can cause them to think they had believed--easy believism.

7. "Handling the word of God deceitfully" = means to falsify the Word of God; to corrupt and adulterate; to make inferior or impure by adding a poor or improper substance--many do this today by mixing philosophy, error, and tradition (man's) with the Word (Cor. 2:8); negated by "nor" which is an equivalent to "not;" Paul refused to do this; his ministry was honest.

8. "But" = introduces a contrast.

9. "By manifestation of the truth" = by making the truth manifest by a simple exhibition of the truth; by stating it just as it is, in an undisguised, clear, and open manner; indicated a public demonstration.

10. "Commending ourselves to every man's conscience" = refers to speaking the truth so that every man's conscience approves it as true and to be in accordance with that he knows to be right.

11. "Conscience" = that faculty of the mind which distinguishes between right and wrong, and which prompts us to choose what is right and avoid what is wrong.

12. "In the sight of God" = before God; as in the immediate presence of God; refers to acting as if we felt that His eyes were upon us; this fact serves to keep us from the hidden things of dishonesty.

V. 3

1. "Our gospel" = Paul called it his gospel, because it was that which he preached--the message he bore; the good news concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. "Be hid" = to be covered; to be veiled.

3. "To them that are lost" = refers to those who are perishing, who are separated from God--not all but those who refuse to heed the light God gives them; refers to those he mentioned in II Cor. 3:14-15.

V. 4

1. "In whom" = the lost of verse 3.

2. "The god of this world" = Note: little "g;" the prince (ruler) of the power of the air (Eph. 2:2) called prince of this world in John 12:31; the fowl of the air that steals the seed (Luke 8:12); the one who gives false light (II Cor. 11:14); indicates the god of this age.

3. "Hath blinded the minds of them which believe not" = to darken the mind or blunt the mental discernment of the unbelieving or those who are lost and choose to stay in unbelief.

5. "Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them:"

A. "Lest" = for fear that; introduces the reason for the blindness.

B. "Light" = illumination; the entrance of truth; to be enlightened or awakened; to illuminate with the knowledge of truth.

C. "The gospel of Christ" = the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16); the good news of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (I Cor. 15:1-4); includes the virgin birth, the sinless life, the vicarious (acting for another) death, burial, resurrection, ascension, ministry of intercession, the sanctification work of the Holy Spirit (II Thess. 2:13), and His bodily coming back again; described as "glorious" = exalted excellence and splendor, because of what it produces--salvation.

D. "Who is the image of God" = "image" means likeness; means that Christ represents to mankind the perfections of God, as an image, figure, or drawing does the object which it is made to resemble; Jesus is the very stamp of God the Father as He was before the Incarnation (God robed in flesh) (John 17:5) and is even now (Phil. 2:5-8); the Lord said in John 14:9, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father;" this means that the Son is the exact reproduction of the Father, a derived image; did you ever hear one say, "You are a spitting image of your dad?" that is what Jesus was to His Father. (Col. 1:15; 2:9)

E. "Should shine unto them" = should illuminate their hearts; to be enlightened or awakened; the devil does not want this to happen.

6. Believe what you can, which means to obey the light you have, and the Lord will give you more light (truth) to obey. But if you do not, Satan will put blindness upon you and you will be worse off.

3. His humility. V. 5-7

V. 5

1. "We" = refers to Paul and those with him, but primarily Paul.
2. "Preach" = to proclaim after the manner of a herald always with the suggestion of formality, gravity, and an authority which must be listened to and obeyed.
3. "Not ourselves but Christ Jesus" = this is the reason Paul gives for stating that his ministry had been free from all dishonest acts and tricks, and that he had not corrupted the word of God--the reason being that he had not preached himself or sought to advance his own interest but Christ Jesus.
4. "Christ" = the English word for the Anointed One; the Messiah of the OT.
5. "Jesus" = the earthly name of God incarnate (God robed in flesh); the Saviour of mankind.
6. "The Lord" = as Lord--the Greek construction does not have a definite article with it; Paul preached Christ Jesus as Lord:
 - A. As having dominion over the conscience.
 - B. As the supreme Ruler in His Church.
 - C. As above all counsels and all human authority.
 - D. As having a right to legislate for His people.
 - E. As having a right to prescribe their mode of worship.

F. As having a right to define and determine the doctrines which one shall believe.

G. As ruling over all.

H. As exalted in His character over all the worlds.

I. As having all things put beneath His feet.

7. This kind of preaching is necessary because Christ will not be Saviour until He is Lord; therefore, this occurs when one is saved and that takes a completed work of Holy Ghost conviction. (I Cor. 12:3)

8. "And ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake" = Paul regarded himself as under obligation to seek the welfare of the church and promote its interest, as a servant does that of his master.

9. "Servants" = bondsman; devoted to another to the disregard of one's own interests; described as "your" = refers to the Corinthians.

10. "For Jesus' sake" = refers to the cause of Christ.

11. Paul sought the welfare of the church and promoted its interests as a servant does that of his master. He followed Christ's example. (Mat. 23:11; 20:27)

V. 6

1. "For" = introduces another reason why Paul and his fellow laborers did not preach themselves, but Christ Jesus--their minds had been so illuminated by that God "who commanded the light to shine out of darkness" = refers to Genesis 1:3; God caused it to shine by a simple command--He just said "Let there be light and there was light."

2. "To shine out of darkness" = refers to Genesis 1:2 where the light shined out of darkness when God said.

3. "Light" = in the Bible is an emblem of knowledge, purity, and truth.

4. "Darkness" = is the emblem of ignorance, error, sin, and wretchedness.

5. "Hath shined in our hearts" = indicates the same God who commanded the light to shine in creation is the same God who has illuminated us.

6. "To *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" = this shows the object or the effect of enlightening the mind (heart--the faculty and seat of the intelligence)--so that the saved may behold the divine glory; the meaning is that it is for the purpose of enlightening and instructing them concerning the knowledge of the glory of God.

7. "In the face of Jesus Christ" = "face" means presence.

8. Basically, this verse says that God, who created the material light (Gen. 1:3) and who is the Father of lights (James 1:17) and sent His Son to be the Light of the world, (John 8:12) did not shine in our hearts for our sakes only or that we might hide the light under a bushel for ourselves, but that we might transmit and reflect it. There is an implied comparison between the creation of light and the dawn of the gospel light and each of these was meant for the good of all the world.

9. The lost sinner's heart is like the earth in Gen. 1:2--formless, empty, and dark. The Spirit broods over the heart and sharpens the Word; (Heb. 4:12) thus, bringing light--the light of the glorious gospel. And when a completed work of Holy Ghost conviction, reproof, and godly sorrow is done, then the sinner becomes a new creation (II Cor. 5:17) and begins to bring forth fruit for the glory of God.

V. 7

1. "Treasure" = refers to the treasure of the gospel--the rich and invaluable truths which they were called to preach to others; indicates the knowledge of the glory of God made known by the presence of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

2. "Earthen vessels" = clay pots; fragile earthen containers or really, the believer's body; pictures human nature in its weakness and frailty as being unworthy to hold a treasure so invaluable.

3. "Excellency" = excess or abundance.

4. "The excellency of the power" = denotes the exceeding great power manifested in connection with the labors of the apostles--the power of carrying the gospel over sea and land, in the midst of danger, and in spite of all the opposition which men could make and especially the power of converting the hearts of sinners, of humbling the proud, and leading the guilty to the knowledge of God and the hope of heaven.

5. "May be of God, and not of us" = may evidently appear to be of God; that it may be manifest to all that it is God's power and not ours; Paul was saying that he did not want to be seen for he was just a vessel.

6. In oriental countries, it was customary to keep gold and jewels in earthenware containers. They were ordinary clay pots used as vaults, but without any great value. Their real value was in the service they performed. The treasure is more valuable than the vessel--the message is more important than the messenger.

7. A thirsty desert traveler comes to water that is piped in. He drinks and says "Thank the Lord for the water," but nothing is said about the pipe. In the same way, one drinks of the Water of Life and says, "Thank God for saving me," because salvation is of the Lord and not of us. We are just pipes that God has chosen and placed in the ministry (all of us, not just the preachers) that should be delivering the Water of Life by our life and lip.

4. His suffering. V. 8-10

V. 8

1. If Paul were out for personal gain as some said, why did he suffer so much? Paul suffered because he did not compromise the Word of God. Men who compromise the Word will be accepted by men and they will honor him, but men were treating Paul like they treated Christ. (II Tim. 3:12)
2. "Troubled" = means that he was encompassed with trials or placed in the midst of them so that they pressed upon him as persons do in a crowd.
3. "On every side" = in every respect; in every way. (II Cor. 11:23-28)
4. "Distressed" = word has a relation to the word translated "trouble;" it means to crowd into a narrow place; to be so straitened as not to be able to turn one's self; negated by "not;" the idea is that though he was close pressed by persecutions and trials, yet he was not so hemmed in that he had no way to turn himself.
5. "Perplexed" = to be without resource; to know not what to do; to hesitate; to be in doubt and anxiety; to make uncertain; bewildered.
6. "Despair" = to be utterly without resource; to lose hope; to be without hope; negated by "not;" thus, this phrase means he was not altogether without help or means.
7. Paul's circumstances often brought him to his wits end so that he hardly knew which way to go or what to do, but never to the place of ultimate despair. It is possible to be bewildered and confused, but not necessarily to give up hope and surrender the fight.

V. 9

1. "Persecuted" = to afflict constantly so as to injure; to annoy constantly; harassed by troubles or punishments unjustly afflicted.
2. "Forsaken" = totally abandoned; to leave helpless; negated by "not;" Paul knew by blessed experience the truth of the promise of Heb. 13:5-6.
3. "Cast down" = to throw to the ground; flung to the ground, as in some lost battle.
4. "Destroyed" = to kill; to put out of the way entirely; negated by "not;" this phrase means to be struck down and beaten to the earth, yet never eliminated or driven from the field of conflict. (Psa. 37:24)
5. Victory is not what we experience but how we experience it.

V. 10

1. "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus" = this expression is designed to show the great perils to which Paul was exposed; the idea is that he had on his body the marks, the stripes, and marks of punishment and persecution, which showed that he was exposed to the same violent death which the Lord Jesus himself endured. (Gal. 6:17)
2. "That" = gives the reason for his suffering--"That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body" = "manifest" means to make visible; to make known; a song writer wrote, "Let others see Jesus in you;" for this to happen, the Lord allows persecution to come so that what is on the inside comes out; the thought in this phrase is exactly the same as in II Tim. 2:11, "If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him."
3. When we die, He lives. (John 12:24)
4. Paul desired for others to see the Lord in him. (Phil. 3:9)
5. Jesus said in Mat. 5:16, "Let your light shine." And Paul was a reflection of light to a lost and dying world.

5. His unselfishness. V. 11-15

V. 11

1. "For we which live" = refers to the apostles and ministers of the Redeemer who still survive when this was written; this included Paul.
2. "Are alway delivered unto death" = exposed constantly to death; this shows what is meant in verse 10 by "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus."
3. "For Jesus' sake" = for the cause of Christ.
4. "Manifest" = to make clear or visible or known.
5. "Mortal" = subject to death; destined to die.
6. "Flesh" = refers to his body.
7. "That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh" = refers to displaying the excellencies of Christ' life in our mortal body so that others can see Jesus in us. (Gal. 2:20)

V. 12

1. "So then" = in accordance with what he had just said.
2. "Death worketh in us" = this is a strong and emphatic way of saying that they were always exposed to death.
3. "But life in you" = the trials and afflictions Paul and the others experienced allowed Christ to live through them; therefore, that light penetrated their blinded minds so that they received the light of the glorious gospel, thereby they had life.

V. 13

1. "We" = Paul and those with him; primarily Paul, the human instrument used to write this book.
2. "Having the same spirit of faith" = could be referring to the saved at Corinth but it does refer to the Psalmist whom he quotes. (Psa. 116:10)
3. "According as" = means to be in agreement with.
4. "As it is written" = the tense in the Greek is perfect tense which means a past completed action with existing results; this means the Scripture was written down and it is still on record even to our day (Psa. 119:89); Paul is saying that he and the Psalmist had the same spirit of faith, thus both saved the same way--by grace through faith.
5. "I believed and therefore have spoken" = Paul is quoting the Psalmist.
6. Then Paul said, "We also believe, and therefore speak" = we believe in the truths of the gospel and as a result, they herald the message forth (Mat. 12:34); anyone who had a firm belief of the truths of the gospel will be prompted to make them known to his fellow-man for that is what is in his heart.

V. 14

1. "Knowing" = to have absolute positive knowledge of the facts; being fully confident.
2. "He" = God the Spirit (Rom. 8:11); He "raised up the Lord Jesus."
3. And He, "shall raise up us also" = refers not only to Paul, Timothy, and the Corinthians but all the saved as well (I Cor. 6:14); it seems that by this phrase, Paul clearly contemplated the possibility of dying before Christ's second coming even though he spoke at times as if he would be changed and caught up. (I Thess. 4:16-17)
4. "By Jesus" = by the power or agency of Jesus (John 5:25); the whole Trinity is involved in the resurrection of the saints.

5. "And shall present *us* with you" = refers to Paul being presented with the Corinthian saints; refers to all saints being publicly and solemnly presented to God as His; He will present us before the throne of glory with exceeding joy (Jude 24); this is part of the joy set before Him that caused Him to endure the cross. (Heb. 12:2)

V. 15

1. "For all things *are* for your sakes" = refers to the glorious hopes and truths as well as trials and troubles that Paul faced were, not only for Christ's sake, but also for the sake of the Corinthians (II Tim. 2:10); Paul was in debt. (Rom. 1:14)

2. "That" = introduces the reason for the "all things" -- "that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God."

A. "The abundant grace" = grace abounding or overflowing; it is implied that grace (unmerited favor; undeserving favor) would abound by means of the labors and self-denials of the apostle.

B. "Through the thanksgiving of many" = it was an object with Paul to so labor that as many as possible might be led to praise God, and have occasion to thank Him for all eternity.

C. "Redound" = to abound or be abundant.

D. "Redound to the glory of God" = that His glory in the salvation of men may abound; manifestation of that which brings forth praise.

3. The sense is that the overflowing grace evident in the salvation of many would so abound as to promote the glory of God.

4. Paul knew his sufferings would mean blessings. Paul was willing to go anywhere, willing to endure anything, if it brought glory to God and good to the churches.

5. A person has reached an advanced state of grace and experience when he can consider his misfortunes in the light of advantage for those whom he serves.

6. Paul's unselfishness was evidence that proved he was sincere.

6. His faith. V. 16-18

V. 16

1. "For which cause" = on account of; Paul is referring to the difficulties and sufferings he faced.

2. "We faint not" = "faint" = means to be utterly spiritless; to be wearied out; exhausted; negated by "not." Paul is saying "we are not exhausted, despondent, or disheartened but sustained and encouraged.
3. "But though our outward man perish" = Paul means the body is in a state of decay and wasting away.
4. "Yet the inward *man*" = the soul; the undecaying; the immortal part.
5. "Is renewed" = is renovated, strengthened, invigorated.
6. "Day by day" = constantly; there was a daily and constant increase of inward vigor.
7. It is a comfort to know that while eyesight grows dim, hands unsteady, limbs weak, and memory faulty, that the inner man of the soul grows stronger through a day by day renewal of spiritual strength.

V. 17

1. "Affliction" = oppression; tribulation; straits; described as "light" = light in weight.
2. "Which is but for a moment" = transient; soon passing away.
3. The trials Paul endured, though continued many years even all through his life, he speaks of as the lightest conceivable thing when compared with that eternal glory that awaited him.
4. "Worketh" = will produce; will result in; the tense is continuous action.
5. "A far more exceeding" = beyond all measure or comparison; one word in the Greek.
6. "Eternal" = this stands in contrast with the affliction that is for the moment; means it has no limits to its duration; it is literally everlasting.
7. "Weight" = stands opposed to the light affliction.
8. "Of glory" = splendor; brightness; magnificence; most exalted state; manifestation that brings forth praise.
9. Paul discovered that his sufferings were light when compared to the weight of glory God has stored up for him. (Rom. 8:18) He knew what he was talking about for he had seen the other side (heaven) and was not able to tell about it. (II Cor. 12:1-4)
10. It is important for us to live with eternity's values in view. Life takes on new meanings when we see things through God's eyes.

V. 18

1. This verse is a paradox to the unbeliever, but a precious truth to the Christian.
2. "Look" = to gaze upon; to fix one's eyes upon; to concentrate one's attention upon.
3. "The things which are seen" = refers to things here below; the things of this life--poverty, want, care, persecution, trials, and etc.; negated by "not" = Paul said he did not concentrate his attention upon things which are seen--things upon this earth.
4. "But" = introduces a contrast.
5. "The things which are not seen" = refers to the glories of heaven which can only be seen with the eye of faith. (Heb. 11:1)
6. "For the things which *are* seen are temporal" = temporary; enduring for a while; passing; this is referring primarily to the things which they suffered, but it is true of all things here below, such as wealth, pleasure, and fame--three idols which the people of this world adore; all of these will soon vanish away.
7. "But the things which are not seen *are* eternal" = everything that pertains to that state beyond the grave; we pass up the "things" that men covet because our hearts are set on higher values--eternal things or things that will last forever.
8. Paul's faith was evidence that He was sincere in his ministry.

CHAPTER 5:

E. Serious, not careless. V. 5:1-21

Paul points out in this chapter that he works from serious motives and not fleshly desires. He gives four motives that control him.

1. His confidence of heaven. V. 1-8

1) Have a new body. V. 1

V. 1

1. "For" = introduces further explanation of the hope expressed in II Cor. 4:17.
2. "We" = "our" = Paul, Timothy, and the saved at Corinth; applies to all the saved.
3. "Know" = to have an absolute positive knowledge of the facts; speaks of assurance; this is the language of strong and unwavering assurance--they had no doubt on the subject.

4. "If" = suggests uncertainty regarding the time but not concerning the fact.
5. "Our earthly house of *this* tabernacle" = literally "the house of the tent;" refers to the house of the soul while upon this earth--the mortal body which is not a permanent dwelling; refers to the body as a frail and temporary abode of the soul which is liable to be taken down at any moment.
6. "Were dissolved" = means to destroy or throw down as a building; for a believer it refers to death where the soul and spirit departs and the body falls down and returns to dust.
7. "We have a building" = refers to something more substantial than the temporary mortal body; this is not speaking of the mansions of John 14:1-2.
8. "Of God" = from God.
9. "An house not made with hands" = refers to a dwelling; an abode; refers to a celestial, immortal body not constructed by man; a habitation not like those which are made by human skill; this does not imply that the "earthly house" (the mortal body) is made by hands but that the earthly dwelling has things about it which resemble that which is made by man--it is temporary, frail, easily taken down, or removed while that which is in heaven is permanent, fixed, eternal, because it is made by God.
10. "Eternal in the heavens" = immortal; to live forever; the future body shall never be taken down or dissolved by death.
11. Of necessity there must be an interval of time between our departure from our earthly body and our inhabiting of our glorified body for those who taste death before the rapture occurs. During this interval we are in a conscious existence. We are not floating around in space as invisible spirits without the capacity of speech or action. Neither are we asleep, as some claim, soul sleep. Death is referred to as sleep but not soul sleep. Proof text: Rev. 6:9-10; Luke 15:7, 10--not angels joying for they do not understand salvation. (I Peter 1:10-12)

2) A new desire. V. 2-4

V. 2

1. "For in this" = in this tent, tabernacle or dwelling; referring to the mortal body--in our body here.
2. "We groan" = to sigh; pray inaudibly; refers to the saints' body sighing for deliverance; denotes strong internal desire; refers to the deep anguish of spirit when the heart is oppressed with anguish, and earnestly desires deliverance; also an application can be made of the body and its groaning with arthritis, migraine headaches, aches, and pains of all kinds. (Rom. 8:23)

3. "Earnestly desiring" = one word in the Greek; to long after.

4. "To be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven" = refers to his desire to put on the immortal clothing or vestment which was from heaven; in this verse Paul uses a metaphor of a vesture--garment.

V. 3

1. "If so be" = if indeed.

2. "That being clothed we shall not be found naked" = this phrase simply means that when we are clothed with our immortal body, we shall not be bodiless, which is the state of those who die before the Lord comes back; in Rev. 6:9 souls were seen under the altar waiting for their glorified body; they were naked--not clothed with either body.

3. This is called Paradise which is where the thief Jesus saved on the cross was promised to go at his death. (Luke 23:43) In OT time this was equivalent to Abraham's bosom in Hades which had two compartments. When Jesus resurrected, He emptied Paradise out of the heart of the earth and carried all the OT saints into the third heaven which is where Paradise is at this time (Eph. 4:8; II Cor. 12:1-4); at the rapture Christ will bring back the saints' souls and spirits to get their glorified body. (I Thess. 3:13; 4:14-17)

4. Paul's desire was not the desire for death. That would be unnatural, even though in Phil. 1:21 he says, "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain." Paul's desire was looking and expecting Christ to return in his lifetime and he would not have to go through a state of not having a glorified body or a physical body. He desired this but it is clear from the phrase "shall raise up us also" in II Cor. 4:14 that he contemplated the possibility of dying before Christ's second coming.

V. 4

1. "For we" = we who are Christians in any period of time.

2. "That are in *this* tabernacle" = refers to our frail and dying body.

3. "Do groan" = this is a further explanation of what is said in verse 2; it implies a burning and earnest desire to leave this world of toil and pain, and to enter into a world of rest and glory.

4. "Being burdened" = being weighted down by the toils, trials, and calamities of this life.

5. "Not for that we would be unclothed" = "would" means desire; this phrase indicates that Paul did not desire to die and depart merely because he suffered much and long;

Paul's desire to enter the eternal world was from a higher motive than a mere desire to get away from trouble.

6. "But clothed upon" = to be invested with our spiritual body.

7. "That mortality might be swallowed up of life" = that mortality (liable to death) might be completely absorbed; that it might cease to be. (I Cor. 15:51-53)

3) Have a new assurance. V. 5

V. 5

1. "He" = "God" = God the Father.

2. "Us" = refers to saints of God.

3. "Hath wrought" = this does not refer to the original creation of our bodies but that He had formed and made the saints for this--"the selfsame thing" = this very thing, namely to that which Paul had just referred--to put on the robe of immortality--the preparation for heaven.

4. "Who also hath given" = in addition to the fitting for eternal glory He has "given unto us the earnest of the Spirit" = to sustain us here; refers to the down payment or the first installment, as a guarantee of the rest that is to follow.

A. The earnest is a pledge--a surety which is security that one gives for the performance of a promise. It is making one's self legally liable for the performance of a contract. When one bids on a piece of property, earnest money is asked, which is a part of a payment of the whole sum promised.

B. The earnest is a person--the Holy Spirit. (Eph. 1:13-14) He stays with you even after a saint's departure from his earthly body, waiting for his glorified one.

C. All saints have the earnest which is a guarantee of a lot more to come.

4) Have a new sphere. V. 6-8

V. 6

1. "Therefore" = points back to what has been said.

2. "We" = refers to all saints.

3. "Always" = at all times.

4. "Confident" = to be of good cheer; to have good courage; to be full of hope.

5. "Knowing" = to have an absolute positive knowledge of the facts; speaks of assurance; this is the language of strong and unwavering assurance--indicates no doubt on the subject.

6. "Whilst we are at home in the body" = while we dwell in the body; the Greek does not represent the body as our home but simply means to be in the physical body.

7. "We are absent from the Lord" = means to be absent as far as being in the Lord Jesus Christ's immediate presence--face to face. (I Cor. 13:12)

V. 7

1. "For we walk" = denotes to live, to act, to conduct ourselves in a certain way which is "by faith" = defined in Heb. 11:1; means to live in the confident expectation of things which are to come, in the belief of the existence of unseen realities.

2. "Not by sight" = means we are not influenced and governed by the things which we see with our physical eyes.

V. 8

1. "We are confident" = repetition of verse 6; we are cheerful and courageous and ready to bear our trial.

2. "*I say*" = Paul, the human instrument the Lord used to pen down this epistle; this emphasizes the repetition of verse 6; in italics thus supplied by the translators to give smooth English reading.

3. "Willing" = to think it good; to be ready to.

4. "Rather" = to a greater degree; to prefer.

5. "To be absent from the body" = refers to death, which is the separation of soul and spirit from the body.

6. "And to be present with the Lord" = refers to being in the Lord Jesus Christ's immediate presence--face to face.

7. Paul preferred to die and to go to heaven, rather than to remain in a world of sin and trial. He basically stated the same thing in Phil. 1:23.

2. His concern to please Christ. V. 9-13

V. 9

1. "Wherefore" = in view of the fact of verse 8--to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.
2. "Labour" = to strive earnestly; eager or earnest to do something.
3. "That" = introduces the reason for the labor.
4. "Whether present or absent" = whether being at home or away from home; "home" meaning the physical body.
5. "We" = refers to Paul and all saints of all times.
6. "We may be accepted of him" = means to be well-pleasing and then to be received with pleasure, thus being approved; to be well-pleasing to Him while in our body, when we face Him at death's door, or at the rapture.
7. "Him" = God; the Lord.

V. 10

1. "We" = refers to the saved and only the saved in context.
2. "Must" = necessity lying in the nature of the case.
3. "All" = each and everyone of the saved; Jew and Gentiles; individually. (Rom. 14:12)
4. "Appear" = to make manifest, apparent, known; to show openly; the secret things of the heart and the life that have not been confessed while on earth will all be made manifest and known; it will show our real nature and character; this is the reason we should live a clean life and have our sins confessed and forsaken. (I John 1:9; Pro. 28:13; I John 2:28)
5. "Before" = in front of.
6. "The judgment seat of Christ" = the bema seat; the tribunal (properly the seat of a judge) of Christ, who is appointed to be the judge of the quick and dead (John 5:22; Acts 10:42); this is not a general judgment but only a judgment of the saved--not to determine heaven or hell, but of the saved's works for reward (I Cor. 3:11-15); this is the judgment of the first resurrection of which Rev. 20:4-15 states they are blessed and will not be affected by the second death, but 1000 years later the lost will be resurrected and they will stand before the great white throne of judgment and all will be cast into the lake of fire.
7. "That every one may receive" = the sense is that every individual shall receive or bear away the appropriate reward for the transactions of this life.
8. "The things" = the appropriate reward of the actions of this life.

9. "Done in his body" = refers to the things done by the instrumentality of the body.
10. "According to that he hath done" = with reference to the things he did; every man shall receive just what, under all circumstances, he ought to receive, and what will be impartial justice in each case.
11. "Whether it be good or bad" = the "good" seems to refer to "gold, silver, and precious stones," which when judged will abide and "he shall receive a reward;" the "bad" seems to refer to "wood, hay, and stubble," which when judged (tried by fire) will be burned and "he shall suffer loss" --will not be lost, for only the saved stand in this judgment; this judgment is described in I Cor. 3:11-15.

V. 11

1. "Knowing" = to have an absolute positive knowledge of the facts; speaks of assurance; this is the language of strong and unwavering assurance--indicates no doubt on the subject.
2. "Therefore" = refers to verse 10 which speaks of the judgment seat of Christ before which all saved will stand and Paul calls it "the terror of the Lord" = this will not be a Sunday school picnic; no one will be chewing gum and blowing bubbles in that day.
3. "Terror" = intense fear; one who causes intense fear; means holy fear which mingles with our love of Him; refers to having a healthy fear of our Lord--respect and reverence of a holy Lord with a hatred for evil.
4. "We persuade men" = "persuade" means to convince someone about something; to urge; refers to being an effective witness by life and lip so that others can see Jesus in you; be salt and light (Mat. 5:13-16); the only way anyone can do this is by the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:8); Paul said, "When I think of the judgment seat of Christ where I must stand and give an account (Rom. 1:14-16), I put forth my best to persuade men." (I Cor. 9:27)
5. "But we are made manifest unto God; and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences" = Paul still trying to explain his ministry in saying, "as to character we have been openly shown to God and I am hoping that we have been openly shown as to what we are in your consciences."

V. 12

1. "For we commend not ourselves again unto you" = Paul had been accused of being guilty of self-praise and boasting, but Paul put a stop to that by stating this phrase; all he wanted to do was influence and persuade men so he would be free from the blood of all men.

2. "But give you occasion to glory on our behalf" = he had preached the gospel with power and the Corinthians were converted and had reason to glory or boast on his behalf.

3. "That ye may have somewhat to *answer* them which glory in appearance, and not in heart" = I Peter 3:15; Paul wanted the Corinthian saints to be ready to give an answer to the false teachers in Corinth; they probably boasted of their rank, their eloquence, their talents, their external advantages--glorying in appearance; but not in qualities of the heart--in sincerity, honesty, and real love for souls.

4. "Appearance" = means "in the face;" this means that their ground of boasting was external and was such as could be seen of men.

5. But Paul was not that way for he was serious, not careless in his ministry; thus, he set forth the aim and glory of his ministry.

V. 13

1. "For whether we be beside ourselves" = "beside" means to be out of one's mind, insane, or deranged; no doubt this was what the false teachers had accused Paul of; also Festus thought Paul was deranged (Acts 26:24); our Lord's friends and relatives thought Jesus was deranged. (Mark 3:21)

2. "*It is* to God" = Paul was saying if I act deranged, "it is to God" = it is in the cause of God, and from love to Him; it is because I have much zeal for Him and such an absorbing interest in His cause; such love prompting so great self-denial and causing us to act so much unlike other men as to lead them to think we are deranged.

3. "Or whether we be sober" = means to have a sound mind and be wise and self-controlled--the exact opposite of being deranged.

4. "*It is* for your cause" = for the people of Corinth--for others.

5. Paul had selfless, dedicated service to God and men. He was serious, not careless in his ministry because of his motives: 1) His confidence of heaven and 2) His concern to please Christ.

3. His constraint of love. V. 14-17

V. 14

1. "For the love of Christ" = refers to the love Christ has for us; this is not (in context) referring to our love for Christ even though all saints possess that (Rom. 5:5); we see the Father's love for sinners (world) in John 3:16; on the cross we see Christ's love for us (sinners) (Luke 23:34; Rom. 5:8; Eph. 2:4-5a); we see His love as He draws us with

cords of love (John 6:44; Hosea 11:4) thus His goodness, longsuffering, and forbearance. (Rom. 2:4)

2. "Constraineth" = to urge; impel; to press on every side; illustrated by a cattle squeeze, etc.-- one that is pushing in on each side, forcing the cow or calf into a position where it cannot move so the farmer can administer medication; this clause literally means "the love of Christ overmasters us"--which means it makes us helpless to do otherwise than to persuade men; the tense of this word is a present tense which means continually working in our lives--before we are saved and after we are saved.

3. "We thus judge" = to determine in our minds; we come to this conclusion; this is our firm conviction and belief--"that if one died for all, then were all dead."

4. "One" = Christ.

5. "Died for all" = Heb. 9:28 states, "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many;" I Tim. 2:16 states concerning Christ, "Who gave himself a ransom for all;" Mat. 20:28 states, "The Son of man came to give his life a ransom for many;" I John 2:2 states, "And he is the propitiation for our sins and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world;" some would say there is a contradiction in these verses; Not so! we must rightly divide the Word of God (II Tim. 2:15); this phrase basically means that Christ's death on the cross, where He paid the sinner's sin debt, was capable of saving all mankind, the whole world, but there are sinners who refuse to obey the gospel by not repenting and believing; thus, they will pay their own sin debt in hell; this is what preachers preach and it is true; therefore, if Christ paid for all sinners' debt on the cross and then those who rejected the truth of the gospel would also pay for their own sin debt; if that were the case, that would be double payment for one's sin and that is not Scriptural; so we conclude that Christ died for those He foreknew would be saved, but His death was capable of paying the sin debt for all--every man and He offers salvation to all. (John 1:9; Titus 2:11-12)

6. "Then were all dead" = all were dead in sin; all were sinners and needed a Saviour; this does not mean that sinners are like a lifeless corpse, for they are not; death simply means separation--in context, separation from God.

V. 15

1. "And *that* he died for all" = His death was capable of saving every individual.

2. "That they which live" = those who are Christians--who are truly saved.

3. "Should not henceforth live unto themselves" = should not seek our own ease and pleasure; should not make it our great object to promote our own interest, but should make it the grand purpose of our lives to promote His honor and to advance His cause.

4. "Henceforth" = no longer; no more; no further.

5. "But unto him which died for them, and rose again" = Paul here states the grounds of the obligation under which he felt himself placed, to live not unto himself but unto Christ:

A. The first is the fact that Christ had died for him and for all His people. The effect of that death was the same as a purchase. (I Cor. 6:20; 7:23)

B. The second is that He had risen again from the dead. It was to this fact Paul traced all his hopes of eternal life, and the resurrection from the dead. (Rom. 4:25)

6. Second "unto" = preposition meaning in the interest of; or for the sake of; for the cause of Him.

V. 16

1. "Wherefore" = in view of the fact that Paul was saved, things were different.

1) There has been a change in how he looked at others.

2. "Henceforth" = no longer.

3. First "know" = to have absolute knowledge of the facts; Paul uses this in a negative sense--no longer "know we no man after the flesh" = means Paul no longer used carnal (fleshly) judgment after he was saved.

4. "Though we have known Christ after the flesh" = Paul before he was saved said he even looked upon Christ as mere man.

5. "Known" = to know by experience; refers to what he understood at that time; thus, he believed Christ was just mere man.

6. "Yet now henceforth" = introduces a contrast; at present Paul said, "Know we *him* no more" = means he no longer viewed Christ (him) as just mere man, reason being Christ revealed Himself as God to Paul on the road to Damascus and he now knows (to know by experience) and understands that he is Christ the Son of the living God and not just mere man; Paul was saved three days later on the street called Straight in Damascus where his sins were forgiven. (Acts 22:16)

2) I am a new creation.

V. 17

1. "Therefore" = in view of the fact of his change he mentioned in verse 16.

2. "If any man *be* in Christ" = means to be united to Christ by faith; to be in Him as a branch is in the vine--that is, so united to the vine or so in it, as to derive all its

nourishment and support from it; phrase "in Christ" simply means to be saved or born again from above; this applies to everyone who is saved, not just Paul.

3. "*He is a new creature*" = a new creation; it means that there is a change produced in the renewed heart of man that is equivalent to the act of creation and that bears a strong resemblance to it--a change, so to speak, as if the man was made over again and had become new; Adam was created in the image of God as God breathed part of Himself in Adam (Gen. 1:26; 2:7) but Adam sinned--fell and was separated from God and he was no longer in the image of God; and that fallen nature was passed to all mankind (Rom. 5:12); thus, we are born in the image of Adam and when one is saved, his spirit is quickened from the breath of God and once again saved man is back in the image of God--a new creation.

3) He lives in a new state of life.

4. "Old things are passed away" = the old view in regard to Christ and in regard to men in general; also sin--hid as far as east is from the west (Psa. 103:12), second death, condemnation as far as the penalty of sin is concerned, guilt gone, upheaval, all unrest, and conviction--that divine distress of the Holy Spirit.

5. "Behold" = to observe with care; used to call special attention to what the writer is about to say; it expresses the writer's vivid realization of the truth he is uttering.

6. "All things are become new" = "have become" = a perfect tense verb is used in the Greek--which means a past completed action with existing results; refers to the purposes of life, the feelings of the heart, the principles of action, the understanding is consecrated to new objects, the body is employed in new services, and the heart forms new attachments; has peace, work of righteousness, rest, quietness, assurance forever, joy unspeakable, and satisfaction--a new creation--saved! saved! saved!

7. Things are different when saved.

4. His commission from God. V. 18-21

1) A new ministry. V. 18

V. 18

1. "All things *are* of God" = similar to what John the Baptist said in John 3:27 "A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven;" here it refers to verse 17, being a "new creature"--all of God, "old things are passed away"--all of God, and "all things are become new"--all of God; no way can man glory in this--salvation is of the Lord!

2. "Who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ" = "reconciled" means to change and when speaking of persons it means to change from enmity to friendship; Rom. 5:10 expresses this, "For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son"--that we were "enemies" not only expresses man's hostile attitude to God but signifies that until this change of attitude (that takes repentance and godly sorrow) takes place men are under condemnation exposed to God's wrath; the death of His Son is the means of the removal of this wrath and by reason of this men in their sinful condition and alienation from God are invited to be "reconciled" to Him; that is to say, to change their attitudes (that takes repentance and godly sorrow) and accept the provision God has made, whereby their sins can be remitted and they, themselves, be justified in His sight in Christ.

3. "And hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation" = in this verse Paul is saying, "He reconciled us to reconcile others;" simply means we are human instruments God uses as He reconciles others; we can not reconcile anyone but He can; this is every Christian's ministry.

4. "Ministry" = service; refers to those who execute the commands of others; in context it means one's work is to persuade men to embrace the offered reconciliation with God; this means we are to lift up Christ by life and lip so that His death affects the sinner to the extent, by divine power, he believes; thus, there is a thorough change worked in the sinner toward God from enmity (hostility) to love and trust.

5. We are just the human instrument. It is His work.

6. Paul had a new ministry and that really humbled him. (I Tim. 1:11-15)

2) A new message. V. 19

V. 19

1. "To wit" = even as; namely; this verse further states the nature of the plan of reconciliation and of the message with which they were intrusted.

2. "That God was in Christ" = that God was by means of Christ; Christ was the mediator by means of whom God designed to accomplish the great work of reconciliation.

3. "Reconciling the world unto himself" = the "world" refers to the human race who are all alienated from Him; this means that God's purpose of mercy embraced all mankind; this is made possible by the blood of Christ shed on the cross (Col. 1:20) and by a completed work of Holy Ghost reproof. (John 16:8-11)

4. Three things happen at the moment reconciliation occurs:

A. "Not imputing their trespasses unto them" = not charging their sin against their account; the idea is that God graciously provided a plan of pardon and offered to remit their sins on the conditions of the gospel.

B. Although not mentioned in this verse, the righteousness of God is placed on their account. (Rom. 4:6)

C. "And hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation" = the meaning is, that the office of making known the nature of this plan and the conditions on which God was willing to be reconciled to man, has been committed to the ministers of the gospel--this is the new message which is one of:

1) Peace.

2) God has paid the wages of sin.

3) God is not at war with sinners. It may seem like it but the devil is a liar. (Rom. 2:4)

4) Sinners can now repent, believe, and be saved for this is the day of grace, but there still has to be a completed work of the Holy Ghost.

5. This is not a message about a lot of rules to follow. It does not speak of a long list of penances. It is not full of religious sayings. It is not centered about some mystical idea of God. It is that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself"--means Incarnation (God robed in flesh through a virgin's womb), a must to have a qualified sin bearer.

3) A new title. V. 20

V. 20

1. "Now then" = since we have a new message; we have a new title.

2. "Ambassadors" = a representative of one country appointed to represent that country in another.

3. "For Christ" = on Christ's behalf.

4. Three things about an ambassador:

A. They are chosen and so are we.

B. They are protected. The nation they represent supplies every need and stands ready to protect its ambassadors. Christ supplies every need and stands with us in every crisis.

C. They are called home before war is declared. The rapture will occur before wrath is poured out upon this earth.

5. All saints are on Christ's behalf, a representative from heaven on earth representing heaven on earth. They are sent to do what He would do were He personally present.

They are to make known and to explain and reinforce the terms on which God is willing to be reconciled to men.

6. "As though God did beseech *you* by us" = the minister's message is to be regarded as the message of God; it is God who speaks.

7. "Beseech" = to beg; entreat; encourage; this means more than to just declare.

8. "Pray" = to desire; beg; long for; make supplications; these two words are strong words and we are to do this--"in Christ's stead" = for the sake of; in behalf of; means we are saying this ("be ye reconciled to God") in Christ's place and as His representatives--but He must quicken those words to you or personalize them to you (Rom. 10:17; John 6:63); this just means we are just human instruments the Lord uses to reconcile men to Himself. (I Cor. 3:5; Rom. 10:13-15)

9. "Be ye reconciled to God" = this is the sum and burden of the message which the ministers of the gospel bear to their fellow-man.

10. What a privilege to have the title, ambassador, but oh what a responsibility we have as well.

4) A new condition. V. 20

V. 21

1. "He" = God the Father.

2. "Him" = God the Son.

3. This verse basically sums up what had to happen so we could be reconciled.

A. "Who (Christ) knew no sin" = Jesus was the sinless virgin born Son of God who knew (did not experience) no sin, for He was not a partaker of Adam's sin nature; He was perfect in every way. (I Peter 2:21-23)

B. "Hath made him to be sin for us" = this is a definite reference to the cross; Gal. 3:13 also referring to the cross says He was "made a curse for us;" on the cross all my sin was placed upon Him and He cried "My God, my God why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mat. 27:46)

C. "That we" = who were sinners. (Rom. 3:23; 5:12)

D. "Might be made the righteousness of God in him" = means we are made righteous in the sight of God--we are accepted as righteous and treated as righteous by God on account of what the Lord Jesus has done.

4. No way Paul could glory in that. He had the right motive--his commission from God and that motivated him to be serious in his ministry, not careless.

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